

**TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
WEST HARTFORD TOWN HALL
ROOM 308 - 7:00-9:00 P.M.**

November 5, 2014

Minutes

In attendance: Commission members Chuck Andrew, Judy Borden, Judy Wyman Kelly (Secretary), David Knishkoway (Acting Chair), Mary Ann Langton, Marcia Lewis (Town Liaison).

1. Approval of minutes from May 13, 2014 meeting without changes.

2. Hall and Conard, Human Rights related

- A.** Jacob Cantor, Student President and Human Rights Coalition President at Hall High School, spoke about the recent racist incidents at Hall and Conard high schools. There is a plan for a student “summit” with groups from both high schools in early December to start some conversations about race, prejudice, and human rights. This summit could be connected to International Human Rights Day on Dec. 10.
- B.** Hall and Conard students are also trying to get the schools to drop the American Indian mascots and team names (“Warriors” and “Chieftains”). Hall has already dropped the mascot, but Conard has yet to do so. Both schools have still retained the names. Surveys have been sent out to students to assess their positions.
- C.** A suggestion was made for the Commission to write a letter to the Board of Education supporting the Student Council position to drop the American Indian mascots and names, copying the Human Rights teachers at Conard and Hall, Dr. Wilson and Ms. Levine.

3. December 10, International Human Rights Day

- A.** Judy K. is meeting with Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Dr. DePalma, on Nov. 11 to discuss integrating Human Rights day activities into the school curriculum on Dec. 10. The Commission discussed different possible school activities, including coverage by WH Community TV.
- B.** Deputy Mayor Shari Cantor suggested that WH Mayor Scott Slifka issue a proclamation honoring Human Rights Day. Judy K. will work on drafting the language.

4. Park Rd. Parade

- A. Judy K and Chuck participated in the Park Road Parade with about 10-15 others. It was a great success and the crowds on the street were enthusiastic.

5. S. Windsor Human Relations Commission

- A. David and Judy B. were invited to dinner with some members of the S. Windsor Human Relations Commission. Some suggestions from this Human Relations Commission included:

- i. Leave every meeting with 2 good ideas.
- ii. Don't leave the meeting without assignments.
- iii. Have events 4 times per year.
- iv. Advertise in libraries.
- v. Have events that include adults and children.
- vi. Events could include music, dancing, movies, etc.
- vii. Co-sponsor events with other groups.

It was suggested that WHHRC could co-sponsor a cultural event in Blueback Square, perhaps with Hello West Hartford or another group.

6. Membership

- A. Fiona and Chester are resigning.
- B. Judy B. will contact Karyl to inquire about her level of commitment.
- C. Two-three slots need to be filled.

7. 2015 year schedule

- A. Commission decided to move from meeting quarterly to meeting every other month on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, from 7:00-8:30 pm, i.e., January 14, March 11, May 13, July 8, September 9, November 11 (note: Veterans Day Holiday; may be adjusted). Marcia will arrange room space with the town.

8. Other business

- A. David mentioned that he appreciated when students came to our meetings and wanted to be sure we kept up that connection with them. Mary Ann offered to email Dr. Wilson at Conard.
- B. Chuck expressed a hope that the Commission could find a few things to focus on each year.

9. Adjournment

10. Meeting adjourned at 9:00.

Minutes submitted by Judy Wyman Kelly